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From: DJS </o=va/ou=exchange administrative group (fydibohf23spdlt)/cn=recipients/cn=(b) (6)  
To: Shulkin <(b) (6) aol.com>  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Subject: FW: Secretary Shulkin: "VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"  
Date: Mon Jul 24 2017 12:25:47 CDT  
Attachments:

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Sent with Good (www.good.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: Ulliyot, John  
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2017 12:11 PM Eastern Standard Time  
To: DJS  
Cc: Leinenkugel, Jake; Wright, Vivieca (Simpson); Blackburn, Scott R.  
Subject: FW: Secretary Shulkin: "VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"

Mr. Secretary — great news — the White House has sent your Op-Ed out to their full media and stakeholder list.

Thanks,

John U.

From: White House Press Office [mailto:whitehouse-noreply@messages.whitehouse.gov]  
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2017 11:53 AM  
To: Hutton, James  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Secretary Shulkin: "VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2017

SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DAVID SHULKIN: "VA HEALTH CARE WILL NOT BE PRIVATIZED ON OUR WATCH"

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"President Trump is dedicated to maintaining a strong VA, and we will not allow VA to be privatized on our watch. What we do want is a VA system that is even stronger and better than it is today. To achieve that goal, VA needs a strong and robust community care program."

Veterans Affairs secretary: VA health care will not be privatized on our watch

By David Shulkin

USA Today

July 24, 2017

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Read the full op-ed [here](#).

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Subject: FW: Secretary Shulkin: "VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"  
Date: Mon Jul 24 2017 11:31:31 CDT  
Attachments:

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Bcc:  
Subject: FW: Secretary Shulkin: "VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"  
Date: Mon Jul 24 2017 11:11:08 CDT  
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July 24, 2017

SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DAVID SHULKIN: "VA HEALTH CARE WILL NOT BE  
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(fydibohf23spdlt)/cn=recipients/cn=[(b) (6)]

To: Ulliot, John </o=va/ou=exchange  
administrative group  
(fydibohf23spdlt)/cn=recipients/cn=[(b) (6)] Wagner, John  
(Wolf) </o=va/ou=exchange administrative group  
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Jacquelyn </o=va/ou=exchange administrative group  
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Camilo J. </o=va/ou=exchange administrative group  
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Lawrence B. </o=va/ou=exchange administrative group  
(fydibohf23spdlt)/cn=recipients/cn=[(b) (6)]

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: OP-ED by Secretary Shulkin - USA Today "Veterans Affairs secretary: VA health care will not be privatized on our watch"

Date: Mon Jul 24 2017 08:53:42 CDT

Attachments:

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OP-ED by Secretary Shulkin - USA Today "Veterans Affairs secretary: VA health care will not be privatized on our watch."

Please share with your lists.

James Hutton  
Executive Director, Public Affairs  
Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20420  
Office: 202-461-7558  
Email: james.hutton@va.gov  
Twitter: @jehutton  
VA on Facebook . Twitter . YouTube . Flickr . Blog

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<https://goo.gl/wAkTyM>

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This is not a novel idea. No health care provider delivers every treatment under the sun. Referral programs for patients to get care through outside providers (known as Choice or Community Care at the VA) are as essential to the medical profession as stethoscopes and tongue depressors. But VA attempts to offer veterans these options have frequently stirred controversy.

Some critics complain that letting veterans choose where they get certain health care services will lead to the privatization of VA. Nothing could be further from the truth.

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VA has had a community care program for years. Congress significantly expanded these efforts in 2014 in response to the wait time crisis. As a result, since the beginning of this year, VA has authorized over 18 million community care appointments — 3.8 million more than last year, or a 26% increase, according to the VA claims system.

But as VA's community care efforts have grown, so has our capacity to deliver care in-house. The VA budget is nearly four times what it was in 2001. Since then, the department's workforce has grown from some 224,000 employees in 2001 to more than 370,000 today, according to the Office of Personnel Management. And we're delivering 3 million more appointments at VA facilities per year than we were in 2014.

In other words, community care or private capacity and VA's internal capacity are not mutually exclusive. We are ramping up both simultaneously in order to meet the health care needs of the veterans we are charged with serving. Our fiscal 2018 budget continues this trend. It will spend \$2.7 billion more for in-house VA care, compared to a \$965 million increase for community care. This means that the total dollar increase for medical care within VA is three times that of the increase for community care. Overall, when all funding sources are taken into account, we expect to spend \$50 billion on health care services within VA and \$12.6 billion on VA community care in fiscal 2018.

Even though these numbers make it abundantly clear VA is not at all headed toward privatization, I understand the underlying concerns of some critics. They don't want to lose all that VA has to offer. I don't either — and we won't.

Many of VA's services cannot be replicated in the private sector. In addition to providing some of the best quality overall health care in the country, VA delivers world class services in polytrauma, spinal cord injury and rehabilitation, prosthetics and orthotics, traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress treatments and other behavioral health programs. The department plays a critical role in preparing our nation's doctors and nurses — 70% of whom train at VA facilities. And we lead the nation in innovation, with VA research having contributed to the first liver transplant, development of the cardiac pacemaker, advancements in treatments for PTSD, cutting-edge prosthetics, and many other medical breakthroughs.

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